

THE POLICIES OF THE J. WILLIAM FULBRIGHT FOREIGN SCHOLARSHIP BOARD

A COMPILATION OF THE POLICIES
OF THE J. WILLIAM FULBRIGHT FOREIGN SCHOLARSHIP BOARD
GOVERNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM UNDER
PUBLIC LAW 87-256 (THE FULBRIGHT-HAYS ACT)



BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
June 2006

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Education requires a continuing act of faith. This is necessary because it is never certain what may be the effect of teaching and learning, or where research may lead. For this reason it is difficult to define precise and specific objectives of international educational exchange activities, or to demonstrate immediate results or quantitative accomplishments. More than anything else, however, a continuous and sustained effort is necessary to the success of any educational endeavor. This is particularly true of activities whose general purpose is to stimulate contacts among and understanding of a variety of the world's peoples and societies.

The Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, as amended (PL 87-256; the Fulbright-Hays Act), hereinafter called "the Act," recognizes the critical relationship between education and international understanding:

The purpose of this Act is to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchange: to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations, and the contributions being made toward a peaceful and more fruitful life for people throughout the world; to promote international cooperation for educational and cultural advancement; and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic, and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world.

The Act consolidated and enlarged the authority of the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, hereinafter called "the Board." In specifying the composition of the Board, the Act also suggests that nonofficial and professional educational judgments are essential to the accomplishment of the purposes of the Act. Activities authorized under section 102(a)(1) and 102(b)(4) and (6) are made the specific concerns of the Board, which is assigned responsibility for selection of participants in the program authorized by section 102(a)(1) and supervision of programs authorized by all three sections. These activities involve the exchange of college and university teachers, advanced researchers at the postdoctoral or equivalent level, college graduates and graduate students, primary and secondary school teachers and administrators, and professionals in a variety of fields. Some of these exchanges are administered directly by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State, or by the U.S. Department of Education (with the assistance of cooperating organizations); others are administered under grant-in-aid agreements made with educational institutions.

SELECTION

Final responsibility for the choice of all participants in educational exchange programs under section 102(a)(1) rests with the Board. Subject to certain considerations outlined below, its objectives are to determine that those named are fully qualified to contribute to or to derive benefits from the activity or project for which they are selected.

S U P E R V I S I O N

The Board has statutory responsibility for supervision of the programs under sections 102(a)(1), 102(b)(4) and (6). Its objectives are:

1. To determine that the activities and projects approved for support meet sound academic criteria and satisfy rigorous standards of excellence.
2. To support activities and projects with broad multiplier effects. As a relatively small number of persons can participate in any of these, it is desirable that they be persons who are or who are likely to be in positions to share their experiences and knowledge with others.
3. To encourage cooperative efforts with foreign governments, agencies, and educational institutions in the development of activities and projects that contribute to the most important educational needs and goals of those countries, but to insure that some openings remain for students and scholars whose interests may not have immediate specific application.
4. To insist upon the mutual aspect of these programs, so that a wide range of openings continue to exist for students, instructors, professors, teachers, and professionals to work in the United States, and for U.S. students, instructors, professors, teachers, and professionals to work abroad. On occasion, this may require the Board to remind a government or one of its agencies that this is an exchange program, and that there must be some reasonable balance between the number of opportunities for those going abroad and those coming from abroad. It will also be necessary to insure that selection procedures permit U.S. scholars from all parts of the United States to participate and permit the placement of foreign students and teachers throughout the United States.
5. To encourage the development of permanent ties between U.S. and foreign educational bodies and institutions, so that contacts and exchanges of persons and information will continue should governmental support be reduced or withdrawn.
6. To increase the number of exchange opportunities by encouraging cost-sharing on the part of foreign governments and institutions as well as U.S. institutions, and by seeking grants-in-aid and other supplemental funds from private sources.
7. To encourage joint planning, supervision, and administration of exchange programs through binational boards, commissions, and foundations, and to give continuing attention to the effectiveness with which these entities function. Such arrangements are necessary to insure that sound educational judgments may prevail over short-term political preferences. The ablest people will be drawn into exchange activities only if these activities are, and are seen to be, insulated against efforts to use them for partisan ends.
8. To evaluate its operations periodically by (a) examining its policies to attract the widest possible pool of applicants, (b) reassessing and, if necessary, modifying existing programs to determine that they fulfill the objectives of the Act, and (c) measuring, to the extent possible, the effect of its programs by studying the subsequent activities and careers of grantees.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In order to meet these objectives, the Board has adopted the following guiding principles for administration of the Fulbright Program.

Program Planning and Grantee Selection:

1. Recognize and reward academic, artistic, and professional excellence.
2. Select grantees who demonstrate dynamism and flexibility for active involvement in the host culture.
3. Reward projects that reflect enduring concerns, emphasize basic subjects, demonstrate sound methodology and avoid politicization of scholarly inquiry.
4. Encourage diversity across the disciplines and the professions.
5. Give highest priority to the student programs. In such programs, emphasize subjects or projects that benefit from a host country's strengths.
6. Seek a balanced pool of senior scholars at various stages in their careers.
7. Award full academic year grants where possible; recognize that one-semester and short-term grants are also necessary in the senior scholar program.
8. Maintain a reasonable balance, over the years, of participants from both partner countries.
9. Seek a balanced but not rigidly held geographical distribution of grantees and host institutions within each country.
10. Maintain the international prestige of the Fulbright Program by national recruitment, open competition, and stringent selection procedures.

Defining a Fulbright Grant:

1. Awards to individuals funded with U.S. Government or partner government money for the Fulbright Program must be called Fulbright grants.
2. Awards funded from other sources may be called Fulbright grants if they meet the following criteria:
 - a) the applicant meets the standards of academic, artistic, or professional excellence;
 - b) the applicant is selected through Fulbright procedures: national recruitment, open competition, stringent selection, and approval by the Board; and
 - c) the program or project for which the applicant is selected has been approved by the Board, either by means of a program proposal or upon separate request from a Fulbright Commission, a U.S. Department of State post or other source.